

# **CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 2007**

**WILLIAM A. BRIGGS BUILDING (REED CONFERENCE ROOM)**

**845 PARK AVENUE**

**PUBLIC WORK SESSION: 6:00 P.M.**

## **MINUTES**

**A special meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at the William A. Briggs Building in the Reed Conference Room with the following members present: Mr. Archetto, Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lombardi, Mr. Stycos, Mr. Traficante, and Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway. Also present were Mr. Scherza, Mr. Nero, and Mr. Votto. Attorney Ronald Cascione was also present.**

**The meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m. It was moved by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Mrs. Greifer and unanimously carried that the members adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel and PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation.**

**Chairman Traficante reconvened the meeting at 6:10 p.m.**

**The roll was called.**

## **I. Executive Session Minutes Sealed – August 16, 2007**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Archetto and unanimously carried that the August 16, 2007 Executive Session minutes remain confidential.**

**Chairman Traficante noted that no votes were taken in Executive Session on any items.**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Lombardi and unanimously carried that the meeting be adjourned to public work session.**

**There being no further business to come before the public meeting it was adjourned to the work session at 6:13 p.m.**

## **II. Adjourn to Public Work Session**

**Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway stated that she wished to recognize that there were many members of the Cranston West track team and individuals present.**

**Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway moved to suspend the rules to allow some public comment at this time.**

**Mr. Archetto seconded the motion.**

**This motion was adopted unanimously.**

**Chairman Traficante requested that there be a couple of spokespersons for the group and to be as brief as possible. He noted that there was a time limit for the public speakers, and he asked the Clerk of the committee to raise her hand when their time limit was up and to make a concluding statement at that time.**

**Mr. Lombardi requested that legal counsel advise the committee on this action. Attorney Cascione stated this meeting is subject to the open meetings laws in Rhode Island. At all times, this committee cannot act on or discuss any matters that are not on the agenda. The committee is suspending the rules tonight in order to allow the public to address the committee. By law the committee cannot respond to the public or engage in any discussion on anything brought before them. The committee is hear to listen for informational purposes which is what the law allows.**

## **PUBLIC SPEAKERS**

**Richard Coran, 160 South Comstock Parkway – He has a daughter who is on the track and field team and will be a senior this year. He is**

also a Cranston West alumnus. He pays close attention to what is going on in the high school. It has come to his attention that there has been an application that is pending for the boys' cross country team, and he has a number of concerns. One of his concerns is the fact that a gentleman by the name of Clem Soscia, who some may or may not know, was an assistant coach in a volunteer fashion for track a lot of this season. He has attended many of the practices as well as all the meets. They had the best season they have ever had at Cranston West in both indoor and outdoor track; athletes developed to all divisional class and all state recognition to a level that had not been seen before. Mr. Soscia's resume in terms of his career in track and field coaching is among the best in the state. He wants Cranston West and the track team to have the best coaches possible, and he believed that his application is the best possible of those interviewed for the position.

Tom DeQuattro, 15 Lilac – He stated that he has a daughter on the team. Some of the parents and team's concerns are in terms of the application and interview process. He knows several years ago with the changes in the athletic department there has been a concerted effort to hire the best candidate available, and he wanted to make sure that it is actually going through and that administration is actually looking at credentials, successes, past histories, as well as current successes. Clem Soscia has been with the team. He saw all three seasons when his daughter participated. There was nothing but high reviews for him. They also know that whoever obtains this

position as the boys' cross country coach will have the inside track on the other subsequent positions that will

Page 3      August 16, 2007

occur during the year such as indoor and outdoor positions. That is where the exposure to the girls will come into play. Many times a coach will coach their specialty; i.e., distance runners or short distance runners; and now they will decide to coach both boys as well as girls. That is where the parents of the girls' team comes into play. They want to make sure that they have the best possible candidate coaching their daughters as well as the boys. The parents have taken positive steps under the direction of coach Crystal and volunteer assistance of Clem that they are moving in a very positive direction. He was impetus behind several of their fund raisers, and he is certainly helping them get to those next levels. They don't want to jeopardize their program and see a valuable asset such as Clem leave it.

Sheila Lagasse, 42 Eilein Avenue, Cranston – She stated that she is the present coach of the girls' cross country indoor and outdoor teams. She has been so for a decade now. She has always been very proud of the team, and they have always had a very good quality of performance and behavior on the team. Up to this year, they had certain opportunities for the girls that they were able to achieve to certain levels and gave them opportunities to even go beyond that.

**When Clem Soscia came on board this year, she was already extraordinarily proud of the program that she had helped to build in her ten years. He helped her elevate that to another level. She was here to try to protect that. She doesn't want to step back, and she isn't able to do it by herself; and she has never had a person who was able to provide the same energy behind it and help elevate it for the girls. The girls had the best possible opportunity this year even prior when she was doing it by herself. He has helped her raise it to a higher standard. The girls deserve to continue in that direction.**

**Carol Fraielli, 22 Dove Court – She stated that she has a son on the boys' cross country team. He is going to be a senior this year. He asked her to come tonight because he was working. He was one of the captains last year, and behalf of all the boys, they respect Mr. Soscia; and they don't want to lose him.**

**Gina Bailey, 170 West Shore Road, Warwick – She stated that she was the past boys' cross country coach. Along with what everybody else has been saying, she agreed 100%. At the present time, she is concerned about the boys and wants the best applicant to go forth with her former athletes who she cares about a great deal. There were three applicants, and two of them she has worked with. Clem is by far the best candidate with his history and prior schools he has worked with. She wants to see the boys handed off to the best hands possible. She can't be there for them this year, but she wished she could be. She wants them to have the best coach possible.**

**Blake Coran, 160 South Comstock Parkway – She stated that she is on the team. She was captain, and Mr. Soscia was the sprinting coach. She was sprint captain for indoor track this year and outdoor track this year. He really helped everyone. He helped her look forward to practice every day. He was their friend, and the team got**

**Page 4      August 16, 2007**

**extremely close to him. He is the most understanding adult coach she has ever worked with. He was always there for them. He was someone to talk to, and she thought he was a great coach and helped her out a lot this year.**

**Chris Weller, Cranston Teacher for 30 Years and Now Retired – He stated that he coached cross country with Sheila prior to her taking the job. He has known Clem over those ten years prior to all of them being together. He has seen nothing that indicates anything other than what he brings to the program. His Coventry team, albeit girls, constantly won the state meets or coming in close. While he knew nothing about the other candidates, Clem is top notch. Everything else aside, whatever the decision is being made, it should be made on his abilities and what he will bring to the program. He has seen a lot because he was with the program for many years.**

**Jennifer Aimes, 64 Red Hawk Drive – She stated that everyone knows**

he has the best credentials of the applicants. As being a part of the team for what he has already given to them this past year, he has put so much time and effort and dedication into this team. He gives the girls so much motivation to reach their best potential. The reason so many of the girls are members is because of what he has given to them already. They would like to continue on with him.

Chairman Traficante informed the public that a resolution will be on the docket Monday evening. The meeting will take place at Hope Highlands Elementary School starting at 7:00 p.m. There is a section on the docket called Public Hearings. He will ask for any student and/or parent or members of the public who wishes to speak on any docketed item to come forth at that time to address that particular resolution.

## **1. Proposed School Lunch Program Price Increases**

Superintendent Scherza stated that administration was requesting an increase in the cost of the hot lunch program at the secondary level. There are a number of reasons to increase the price, but the primary reason is due to the fact that the program ran a deficit this year, and the projections don't look better for next year if they don't increase revenues.

Mr. Michael Marrocco, Director of Food Services, commented that the



**TV channels have been bombarding the news with the fact that the kids are not getting the food items they really want to have. There are other areas in the schools where they are serving items the kids want to have so they go there and don't go to the lunch rooms.**

**With regard to milk pricing, because of the amount of corn that is going to ethanol now, from last year at this time to this year milk has gone up almost \$1.00 a gallon. The district is getting hit with all those types of things. He has talked with other directors**

**Page 5      August 16, 2007**

**throughout the state, and they are having the same problems. They are looking to increase their prices as well. Participation is down because of the Wellness factor, but they are striving with the new laws and regulations to do what they need to do with that. They are hoping that there will be a turn-around. The good news is that they have just completed a survey in the State, and 40% of the students in the State are on diets. They are hoping that those kids who are on diets will be looking for these types of items and will come through the cafeteria to purchase those types of items. He further commented that it is difficult because the students have eighteen-minute or twenty-minute lunches; and it is difficult to get the students to buy seconds. The schools are built for one-meal type of service, and there are a lot of students coming down all at once; and they have to get them through within that time span.**

**Superintendent Scherza commented that since the district has gone to School Max, the district has actually maximized the number of students who can be subsidized. In the past, there were many upper class students at the secondary level who didn't bring in their paper to qualify to get free or reduced lunch. Now with the advent of School Max, they started last year that when they qualify one member of the family they now qualify every member of that family. In the past, there were students who fell through the cracks, and they were lost. Mr. James Dillon has been working very hard over the past two years to get entire families to increase the numbers. Despite that, the program is still having its fiscal woes.**

**Mr. Traficante asked what the percentage of increase has been of identification in terms of the number of students, and Mr. Dillon responded that they are identifying approximately 150 more individual students.**

**Mr. Balducci distributed to the committee a three-year analysis for 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007. Unfortunately, over the last couple of years the numbers have gone down. In 2004-2005, the district served 735,660 lunches, in 2005-2006 it dropped down to 692,943, and in 2006-2007 it dropped down to 663,704 lunches. He further explained that when he built the 06-07 budget, he took the participation numbers of 05-06 and then factored in a price increase. They weren't looking for an increase in participation; they wanted to**

keep it level. Unfortunately, they did not match the 05-06 participation numbers. They went down just under 30,000 meals served. He referred to the expenses over those three years which was outlined on the three-year comparison. For the end-of-year numbers for 06-07, the program had an approximate \$193,000 deficit for the year, and that was made up of two factors, approximately \$70,000 shy of budget on the revenue side and some overages on the expenditure side as well. With those factored in, there is a \$193,000 deficit.

Mr. Balducci went on to explain that in the past the program has been able to absorb deficits because they have had an accumulated earning account that they were able to work off of. This year's \$193,000 deficit will now put the program into a cumulative

Page 6      August 16, 2007

deficit of approximately \$55,000 which means it has no funds available to offset any more bad years. If this trend continues, it will put the program into a worse situation. Mr. Balducci commented that there was further information he should provide to the committee, and would send it in the weekly update. He noted that the information provided was actual figures. He wanted to give them the budgeted figures so they could compare them against the budget. He explained that the figures on the expenditure side exceeded the budget, and on the revenue side, they did not meet the budget.

**Mr. Stycos commented that when Mr. Balducci gave the presentation last year the lunch program had been billed for fire safety improvements and had been billed for a portion of Mr. Balducci's salary and other things. Mr. Stycos asked if these things were still going on. Mr. Balducci responded that the fire improvement was a one-time expense, and in the most recent fiscal year, the program did not have to absorb that cost. With regard to the administrative piece of his time and his staff's time, that is no longer billed to the program; but they are continuing to absorb the cost of the register people which is approximately \$100,000 that is being absorbed by the lunch program. In the past, that was a service provided by the classroom teacher. Once a week a driver goes to the state warehouse to pick up the food available through the Commodities Program, and the district charges back their time for the time spent to pick up the food.**

**Mr. Lombardi asked that with the 25 cents increase was the school district looking to weather the \$55,000 or looking to add it to the accumulated retainer account to weather a storm in the future. Mr. Balducci responded that with the 25 cents increase, the district is looking at an approximate \$80,000 to \$85,000 revenue stream. That is based on current participation. He did not factor in the 10 cents increase on what type of revenue it would bring in. Mr. Scherza added that enrollment is expected to decline in each of the next ten years.**

**Mrs. Greifer asked if it was this year that they would have to begin absorbing the cost of the inspections, and Mr. Balducci stated that the health department is putting the burden on the local districts to pick up the tab for the twice-yearly inspections of the kitchens. In the past, the state would absorb that. They have told the district to hire a company to inspect the kitchens and pay for it.**

**Mr. Archetto commented that if the committee supports the increase in price for lunch, the profits will be between \$80,000 and \$85,000 next year based on the numbers. That does not include the milk. Mr. Balducci responded that he was not saying that it wouldn't give the program a profit, but the problem is that labor costs are going up next year (07-08) and fixed costs are going up. They are looking to help pay for those increases. Mr. Archetto asked Mr. Balducci if he perceived a profit to pay off the**

**Page 7      August 16, 2007**

**\$500,000 deficit, and Mr. Balducci said no. Mr. Traficante asked if they were speaking about elementary and secondary, and Mr. Marrocco responded that the price increase is for secondary only.**

**Mr. Stycos commented that payroll went up approximately 20%. Mr. Balducci added that it is based on the most recent negotiated contract. Mr. Balducci explained what was contained in the 20%**

increase. He further remarked that he would forward the 20% breakdown to the committee. It is questionable whether or not the program will be able to sustain on its own. There is another situation where as of June 30th Mr. Marrocco will incur expenses during July and August to get the program up and running both from a payroll standpoint and purchasing food for the upcoming school year. In the past, Fund I which is the general fund will loan the money to the Food Service Program; and as the program kicks in the money is returned to the district. At the end of June, there was a \$193,000 loss on paper, the Food Service Program owes the general fund \$283,000. They have approximately \$107,000 in the bank as of today. Normally that money would be used to pay for the food expenses and payroll during the summer months. He will not have enough money to pay back the general fund. They are hoping that when the program kicks in this school year that at the month's end he will have made a profit and pay back the loan. If that doesn't happen, that loan will increase. Prior to Mr. Balducci's coming on board, the program was able to squirrel away some money into some money market CD accounts. Those amounted to \$64,000. They have left those accounts in tack; they haven't tapped into them; but he will have to at this point to pay back the general fund a portion of the \$283,000. Even with that, they may run into that situation where that obligation will grow at the end of the 07-08 fiscal year.

Mr. Lombardi asked if the state match was going to be in existence next year, and Mr. Balducci responded that it has for the last few

years since he has been on board. Every year it has gone down a little bit. Part of the problem is that when the participation numbers go down, the district is losing the paid students and also the free and reduced federal reimbursements as well. Mr. Stycos commented that he thought the number of reimbursed lunches was going up, and Mr. Scherza responded that the number of students eligible that the district has been able to identify has gone up because in the past they did not know about them. Mr. Stycos asked if the numbers were more or less among the free and reduced. Mr. Marrocco responded that the number is more among the free and reduced, but there are less students buying on the regular side. The free and reduced number is level. It is minus 162 meals a day, and this year they want to try and recapture that number. Mr. Marrocco further explained that in other cities such as Providence their free and reduced participation make up 99% of the participation. Cranston doesn't have a lot of kids in the program using it. The Commodity Program has dwindled down to almost nothing so he is out buying food that costs a little more.

**Page 8      August 16, 2007**

Mrs. Greifer asked if the increase in the price of milk was to cover what milk currently costs or if there was a cushion there. Mr. Marrocco responded that at the current time milk is costing 18 cents a carton, and he is looking to charge 50 cents for that carton, and the

district will be equal with other school departments. Others will be even higher than that. This could change if milk prices go up during the year. Mr. Lombardi asked how long the \$2.50 lunch price has been in effect, and Mr. Marrocco indicated that this price has been in effect for three years.

Mr. Stycos referred to the line for government reimbursement and asked if it was the cash reimbursement and not the in-kind reimbursement for commodity food, and Mr. Marrocco responded that this was correct. Mr. Balducci noted that in the "Purchases" line item the amount expended to purchase commodities as well as items from a regular vendor are included in that line item. Mr. Marrocco added that he would give a list to Mr. Balducci for the committee of what the commodities items cost last year. Mr. Stycos asked Mr. Marrocco if he had an estimate of how much of the problem was declining participation and how much is it because the Commodity Program is not providing as much food. Mr. Marrocco referred to his earlier comment that he thinks the students are not buying his meals because food is available for them in other areas of the schools. He is doing beautiful vegetables, and the students don't eat them. If they don't like it, they won't buy it. As an example, when the program was making French fries, they would sell eighty cases a week in five schools. Right now they are selling no French fries, so that is eighty cases of sales which is a lot of revenue they have lost. Culinary at West and Panda's Pantry at East are selling items such as cookies. They are not getting them through the lunch program any longer and



are getting them from other areas.

Mr. Stycos asked if everyone knew that in the high schools on September 1st the vending machines would contain water, 100% juice and milk. Mr. Nero responded that he met with the soda companies at the beginning of the school year because in fairness to Coca Cola even though the district is selling only water and juice and the schools are selling a lot less, but Coca Cola is still honoring their contract and Pepsi is not. Sean Kelly, principal of Cranston East, will be sitting down to negotiate his contract with Coca Cola because his contract was solely for water and 100% juice. To his knowledge, the schools weren't selling the cookies, etc. because they have been trying to adhere to the Wellness Policy. Ms. Coutu stated that they are not selling any cookies at all. The only item the Culinary Program has sold for fund raisers is calzones. Mr. Peter added that if a school is going to sell ice cream, it is twice a month that they can do it. The district is attempting to adhere strictly to the Wellness Policy.

Mr. Archetto commented that from last year the School Lunch Program has a \$55,000 deficit; then the School Lunch Program has a loan from the general fund of \$283,000; now the largest revenue maker in the School Lunch Program is French fries, and they are not offered to the consumer because of the Wellness Policy. His opinion is to offer

the students the vegetables and allow them to have a choice. Why force one commodity on them? Mr. Stycos responded that it isn't healthy. Mr. Archetto responded that if taxes go up in the city, that won't be healthy either.

Mr. Scherza stated that he is a believer in the Healthy Schools Coalition. The mentality came down to ask the question do the districts sell themselves out to make that \$50,000 or \$100,000 or do what is best for kids. Childhood obesity, Diabetes, and Asthma are on the upswing. Even though the districts are losing monetarily, given their choice, everyone knows what the students will do. It is a valued judgment that this committee and community has to make whether or not they are going to contribute to the wellbeing of students or are they in it for the dollars. He told Mr. Archetto that he understood his point.

Mrs. Greifer referred to the Bain population and noted that they were the only school that increased its participation numbers last year. They were involved in the Healthy Body Healthy Minds Program which was a year-long project. Mr. Marrocco noted that Bain is approximately 60% free and reduced lunch.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway asked if anything had been done out of the box with regard to menus. In East Greenwich they opened up a café within their food program, and it is their food program. She didn't

know if it was privately backed. If kids are on board with something, they own it and like it more. She asked if there could be some creativity with the secondary students. Mr. Marrocco responded that the students in East Greenwich are not buying into that program. Mr. Balducci added that East Greenwich has a privately run lunch program. They did do it in house and then decided to go with an outside vendor. Even with the outside vendor, the district has incurred over the three years expenses totaling \$140,000 that the district had to absorb. Mr. Balducci explained the process when dealing with an outside vendor.

Mr. Nero remarked that when he was principal at Western Hills his Student Council and Mike Marrocco met together to try many different things. String cheese lasted for a little while, and they tried a variety of things, and it didn't work out. He remembered when he began teaching in Stoughton thirty-two years ago they had a café, but those were the days when students had study halls. Right now because of all the requirements, there is not a spare moment in a student's schedule. At East, the same thing will happen to Panda's Pantry. Students had an opportunity with a free period to do that type of thing. They can't fit their classes in now. He thought that when the Wellness Policy was adopted it would force kids into eating healthier foods. The bottom line is that if they don't see what they want they are not eating. Mr. Marrocco reminded the committee that they are losing 162 meals a day, which is not a lot of meals; but it adds up on the other end especially when they are paying higher costs for foods.

**Mr. Traficante mentioned that he went to a Charter School meeting today, and the Charter Schools are facing problems with the meals programs. They are looking into a program that is starting in Boston with frozen foods that supposedly meets the Wellness parameters as well. Mr. Marrocco explained that they are all pre-packaged frozen meals. The company supplies a big freezer, brings in the food, and heats it up in microwaves.**

**Mr. Lombardi asked Mr. Balducci if he had projected what would happen if the lunch price wasn't adopted. Mr. Balducci responded that he and Mr. Marrocco are just beginning to craft next year's budget. The program will be further in the hole if the increase isn't adopted.**

**Mr. Stycos referred to the cashier issue which is costing \$100,000 a year. He would like to discuss it at a future meeting in Executive Session.**

## **2. Proposed Physical Restraint Policy**

**Mr. Scherza explained that all public schools are required to have 15% of the entire faculty trained in restraint training which is referred to CPI. The 15% is a minimum number. It is also required for recertification as well. He noted that physical restraint is the last option.**

**Mr. Laliberte explained that the regulations were passed in 2002, and they were passed to regulate restraint and to avoid restraining. It is an eight-hour training, and it is not how to restraint, although that is part of it; but the majority of it is about how to talk the child down and how to avoid having to get into a situation where a staff member would have to restrain a youngster. The district has been following the procedure that was set forth since 2002, and that requires the district to train two people in every building. They have always trained the principals as one of those people, and then a teacher in the building would volunteer, or if a school had an assistant principal, that person can be trained. Now they are requiring that the districts have a school policy that is adopted by the School Committee based on the state regulations. The intent of the law was to prevent and prohibit corporal punishment and to promote positive behavioral support. It wasn't supposed to be that it was okay if one used restraint in order to change a child's behavior. There are some specialized programs out there such as squirting water and restraining a child in order to change their behavior. In no way was that what this was intended to do. Physical restraint should only be**

used when one wants to prevent harm or injury to the child or to somebody else in the room. It is for emergency situations; it doesn't prohibit, however, any personnel from restraining a youngster if they know that harm is going to come to somebody or to the child himself.

The intent of the law is to delineate a whole list of protocols that one is supposed to follow when they need to restrain a youngster. With some of the youngsters the district deals with today, if one

Page 11      August 16, 2007

were to visit the Horton Program, one will find that even these little ones who are K to grade 3, and they are bringing back from outside placements students in grades 3 to 5, they will need from time to time some restraint either because of the biting, kicking, or hitting. One will see this with a growing population of autistic children coming into the schools. It does delineate the appropriate types of physical restraint, and it establishes protocols when the staff does have to restrain a youngster. It really emphasizes de-escalation strategies. Many times what a teacher says or does can actually cause the child to spiral out of control. Instead, this training teaches teachers to talk them down and to avoid certain behaviors that may trigger that behavior from escalating.

There are also protocols with regard to reporting procedures. The district has to report every time a child is restrained. This has been done since 2002, but now the state is going to start collecting data.

**The district has a form that they have been using to report a restraint, but now the state is going to take a count of every time a district restrains a youngster. It also requires parent notification. There is a letter the teachers are aware of where they notify parents when their child has been restrained. There are times when a parent may complain how their child was restrained, and there has to be a procedure on how the grievance will be addressed.**

**The district has to establish an annual training program, and in Cranston there are three days of new teacher orientation where thirty-five teachers are coming on board, and everyone one of them will be trained in the eight hours of physical restraint training. Whether they want to go on and continue it year after year, will be their choice. They will under Cranston's program have to be made aware of it. Every teacher in the system has to be made aware of the rules and regulations of restraining a child every year, and the district is in the process of developing a power point presentation that a teacher will be able to look at in order to review those rules every year. The teachers have to be made at least aware of it. Once they have been trained in eight hours, they have to be trained every year. They can take a three-hour update yearly. The district has paid for it out of Title 4 which is a federal program, Safe and Drug Free Schools.**

**They also pay for it out of professional dollars because the professional Title 2 will also pay for the professional development needed. Mr. Laliberte turned the presentation over to Mr. Dillon who was one of the first people in the district trained in physical restraint.**

He then trained many of the teachers in the district. At the present time, there are three people who are training all of the teachers in the district, and Sandi Matoian Heard from Sanders Academy Program is heading up this whole program in the future. It was under Paul Cardoza. Mr. Lombardi asked if it was the district's goal to certify every teacher in physical restraint. Mr. Laliberte said that the goal is that every teacher will be made aware of the rules of restraint and what they can and cannot do as far as restraining a child. The school system has to ensure that there are at least two teachers or two people in every building who are trained in restraining so that if a child needs to be restrained those people will do it. Mr. Lombardi commented that they should be fearful of designating the physical restraint experts if the teacher is walking by

Page 12      August 16, 2007

and sees a situation that requires physical restraint. He wouldn't want them to back off because they are not trained in physical restraint and won't do anything about it. Mr. Traficante brought up the example of Cranston East and Cranston West that are large schools, and the teacher trained is nowhere near the incident. Mr. Laliberte indicated that all of the administrators in those buildings have been trained.

Mr. Scherza re-emphasized that since Cranston has all new teachers for three days, they have to commit to the district three days of



training. Administration has directed for this year that all new hires from henceforth will undergo this training. If there are thirty new hires next year, thirty will be trained. Hopefully the retirements will help build up that cadre. Mr. Nero added that this training is not just for teachers. They are also training teacher assistants who are on the buses to and from school. The autism population was at Western Hills, and a number of the teachers were trained; however, the one-on-one assistant is trained. The one-on-one assistant will be dealing with a situation, and a code goes out into the buildings to those who have training to report to that room to offer assistance. Sometimes it would take as many as six teachers and himself to restrain a child. Mr. Laliberte added that they just developed another training to strictly deal with autistic children because they know it is a growing population.

Mrs. Greifer mentioned that in the last paragraph of the policy under “Emergency Situations” it takes care of what Mr. Lombardi had referred to earlier. It states that any teacher, employee or agent can use reasonable force to protect from imminent physical harm. Mr. Lombardi added that under “Authorized Staff” it says that there are certain trained individuals. It states that this training requirement does not preclude any teacher .... from using reasonable force necessary to protect students, other persons, or themselves from imminent serious harm. He wanted to make sure that this was articulated to everyone and the general public.

Mr. Dillon referred to the regulations that were passed in 2002 and the proposed School Committee policy. He noted that Mr. Laliberte's comments were related to the law, and he would be discussing with the School Committee the proposed policy for physical restraint. This policy is based on the template that the Rhode Island Department of Education gave to the district as a result of the regulations that were passed. It is something that they put into language for the districts. It has been through the legal process as well. It very closely mirrors the regulations required, and they are restated in the policy. It identifies the annual professional development which relates to an understanding of the regulations not to be able to physically restrain necessarily but to understand what the regulations say about physical restraint and the use of it in schools. They can't use it for punishment. When it is presented to the staff, they need to know what these regulations say and the process to follow if they have to restrain a child. They need to know what to do instead of restraining so that they won't light the fire on some of these kids. That is pretty much what the training involves. It doesn't involve how to hold them or how to do any restraining at all.

With the advanced

Page 13      August 16, 2007

physical restraint training, the regulations require one person per building; Cranston is stipulating two people because the approach used is a team approach. The training given for advanced physical

restraint is CPI which is the Crisis Prevention Institute. Cranston's trainers are actually trained with the money from the Interlocal Trust because this is the training they endorse.

Mr. Dillon went on to explain that the district plans to develop a power point presentation so that people can look at and be trained as they need to as well as take the advanced training if they need to. The type of restraining the district does really enforces not getting into a restraint situation with a child. They want to avoid that at all costs. Sometimes they have to. He has had to restrain kids in school buildings. Prior to working in Cranston, he worked at Bradley Hospital and restrained kids there every day. They didn't use this type of restraint. It is not the same type of restraint that police will use. Police don't care if they injure somebody when they restrain them. They have a different obligation. The district has an obligation not to do any harm either to the person being restrained or the person doing the restraining. If someone walks into a situation, they wouldn't encourage that person to restrain a kid if they don't feel they are able to; they wouldn't want that person to get hurt. That is a part of the training as well with the staff. If a person sees a dangerous situation and wants to address it, it is up to that person. The main thing is to get help and to try to avoid a restraint situation. They try to protect the people on both sides.

Mr. Dillon went on to say that for the first time in Rhode Island the regulations prohibit corporal punishment. Up until these were

passed, it wasn't against the law, and it is now against the law to corporally punish children. With regard to CPI, it is a non-violent physical restraint; there are no choke holds or pressures. It is a team approach; two people are used to restrain a child. The people are trained in CPI and can train only Cranston teachers and staff. They cannot go out and make a living at it somewhere else. Neither the insurance company or CPI will allow them to do that.

There will be two people in each building trained; the State requires one per building, however, Cranston has a lot of special programs that all of the people in those programs will be trained. Even though there is only one building official person, within that building depending upon the type of programming that is taking place, there may be three or four or all of the people in a particular classroom that have been trained.

The policy spells out the reporting procedures. The big thing that is required is parental notification as well as documentation of the restraints; and that is in the form that is attached to the proposed policy. The form has to be filled out within twenty-four hours of a restraint or as soon as possible. Parental notification is required within two days. This district virtually notifies parents almost immediately. This form has to be forwarded to the Superintendent's office where they will keep a record of it. The restraints are reported once a year.

On the last page of the document, they left some leeway for principals on how they will report it to the parents especially when there are some students where they will have a known quantity of restraints. Whenever one of these situations occur, one will spend a lot of time talking to parents explaining why it happened with the child and the person doing the restraint, the building principal, and the other people involved. They want to give them latitude to use their own discretion in how they dealt with a situation each time.

Mr. Lombardi noted that the School Committee receives copies of incident reports and asked if this will be a part of that reporting. Mr. Scherza responded that he has not discussed this with the executive staff. Mr. Dillon added that it could depend on the nature of the incident. Mr. Nero suggested that where it is a serious incident and involves exclusion from school or suspension from school, in the course of the day especially in an autism class restraint may be used several times during the course of the school day; and the School Committee would be inundated with those types of reports. Mr. Lombardi asked if this was a template prepared from regulations, and Mr. Dillon responded that the template was prepared by RIDE based on these regulations. He and others then took the template and developed the policy from that.

### **3. Automotive Program at the Cranston Area Career & Technical Center**

**Mr. Scherza reported that approximately two months ago the committee asked him to prepare a report on what it would cost to reinvigorate this program. He has had some difficulty getting this information for the past month because he is getting different responses from different people. He has gone to the Commissioner and will pass on that information to the committee what he knows as of today.**

**It is estimated in talking with Ms. Coutu and people at the Career and Technical Center that at a minimum it would take approximately \$1/4 million to reinvigorate the program. It would take approximately \$150,000 which is in the budget for the teacher, technical assistant and benefits. The rest is approximately \$100,000 for new equipment, materials, and supplies. As a minimum, they came up with approximately \$70,000 in equipment that might be needed for the program. Much of the equipment, materials, and supplies have already been purchased over the last few years; but right now they can't be located so they would have to buy new materials again. It would also involve any costs related to programmatic certification which has never been done for the Career and Technical Center over the last three years. All of this \$250,000 would have to be done at a total cost to the Cranston appropriated operating budget since the Department of Education has already indicated that they will not fund**

the program and have not funded it again for this year. He believed that Ms. Coutu had left it in the budget for this year. Ms. Coutu commented that when she put together the Perkins Grant Mr. Iozzi, the automotive teacher, had submitted a request for funds for his

Page 15      August 16, 2007

program, and not knowing where the program was going, she left it in the Perkins Grant. That went forward with a request of approximately \$14,000 for items for the automotive program. She met with Vanessa Cooley, Director of Career and Tech for the State, and she informed Ms. Coutu that they had denied the program. Mr. Traficante asked for clarification on the statement that \$78,000 worth of equipment was purchased and that they couldn't locate it, and Mr. Scherza explained that they would have to purchase \$78,000 worth of equipment much of which was bought in the past but is now relocated. Some things were not secured, stolen, or misplaced. He asked Ms. Coutu if she had walked into the woods and found some rusty equipment, materials, and tools. Ms. Coutu responded that there was a piece of equipment that was reported as missing. There was no idea of how it was missing, and the custodians found that piece of equipment in the woods behind the school. Mr. Scherza remarked that it was never reported as being stolen. He further remarked that if they re-opened the program, they would incur the costs for all students who live outside of Cranston meaning students from other communities who want to come to the program since the state would not recognize it

and has stated that they will not again recognize the program that has not been certified and operational. Since they haven't had a certified program, they would offer the program, but if someone came here the state wouldn't offer their 50% tuition for that student. In order to reinvigorate and re-implement the program, the other communities in Cranston's Career and Tech collaborative, Foster, Glocester, Scituate and Johnston, would have to vote, both the planning and coordinating committees, to propose it to the Department of Education, to have curriculum and fiscal plans approved, obtain certification, staff and equip the site. As recently as today, he called again to talk with Mr. Forest Avila, who is the chief legal counsel for the Department of Education. Yesterday face to face he asked Commissioner McWalters for the clarification he promised him quite some time ago. Both indicated that they had been researching the issue, their legal department is drafting a letter, and that they would have it to us "by the beginning of the week". Both further indicated that all proposals and plans would have to be vetted by the Department of Education prior to any funding or program start-up. For any new program, a new advisory committee would have to be appointed and seated. At this time, the district wouldn't do it on cronyism; they will do it the right way in terms of the appointees. Last time the committee heard from people speaking up who had never been inside the program or seen a minute of the class in session who were passing judgment and making some allegations.

Mr. Scherza went on to say that the Cranston East automotive classes



could accommodate the number of Cranston residents who have indicated an interest in automotive technology without adding class sections, staff, or additional costs. It should be noted that like the Career and Technical Center Automotive Program the program at East is not NATEF certified. However, by employing the Cranston East site there would not be the element of another area from Cranston's operating budget or having to subsidize students from other communities without full reimbursement. The feeling is that the Cranston piece could do it. They would not have to implement or replicate a

Page 16      August 16, 2007

program during a time of tight resources. He apologized and made no excuses for not having the Department of Education response. The district was told by Mr. Roy Seitsinger and Vanessa Cooley from that RIDE and personally by Commissioner McWalters when he confronted him again yesterday and Forest Avila, chief legal counsel, that the committee would be getting it. They had some difficulty drafting it.

Mr. Scherza indicated further that the committee had asked previously how some people would be affected by this program. He explained that Level I students from Cranston totaled 6. There were 12 students total. This information is as of 2006-2007. Of the 12, 6 are from Cranston; 1 moved to Foster; 1 from Cranston had already

quit in May; 3 from outside of Cranston chose new programs at the Career and Technical Center; one from Johnston chose to stay for his senior year.

Regarding the Level 1 grade distribution, which would dictate who can come back, there were 3 F's; 1 D; 4 C's, and 3 B's.

In terms of Level 2 students who will be returning, 6 students from Cranston had the opportunity; 1 student from Johnston chose to stay for senior year at the school; 1 student quit school in May to get his GED from Ponagansett.

With reference to the grade level distribution for Level 2 students going from junior to senior year if the program were to continue, there were 3 F's; 2 D's; 2 C's; and 1 B meaning that most of those students would not be allowed to continue any way.

With regard to how many students applied for the program for 07-08, there were 22 applications; 10 of them withdrew their applications because the application process started in February; many of them withdrew their applications and stayed at their home schools; 4 of those 10 were from Johnston; 4 of the 22 also accepted another area of electronics; 3 accepted another area of building and construction; 2 accepted computers; 1 accepted drafting; and 2 were not accepted due to grades.

Mr. Scherza went on to say that he has asked time and time again, and to his knowledge there has been only parent and/or student who has called to even voice a complaint on this issue. Ms. Coutu clarified that the state department of education will not fund anything that the district requests of them in terms of equipment or materials under the Perkins Grant. They have not yet said that they wouldn't pay half of the student tuition. She suspected that it would come down the line because they are requiring programs to be certified and go through a program certification process that they just went through, and it becomes more rigorous each year. As a program doesn't meet program certification, they are saying that they will no longer fund the programs. This year was the first year of this process. They were a little bit more lenient this year, and the backup information she gave to the committee was out of context. She handed in a grant that was very thick and took approximately two months to write due to the

Page 17      August 16, 2007

new approval process. Each program had to send in an application format as well as a narrative and documentation to prove that what they said in their narrative and application was true. Each teacher was asked by her to make their narrative a part of their application and to provide her with the documentation to prove it because she doesn't have that kind of material at hand and wouldn't know what they wanted to put in the narrative. Last week Ms. Coutu received a

letter from Vanessa Cooley saying that the center had received substantial approval for her grant which meant that 80% or more of her grant was approved. Some of her programs were not approved. She explained some of the programs that were approved and those that required more information. Automotive was denied. This is read by an independent panel of a variety of people, and they come up with their recommendations and decide who gets funding. She did in good faith hand in the application form and the request for funding for the program which amounted to approximately \$14,000 but was denied. That is another \$14,000 for instruction that Cranston's operating budget would have to provide.

Mr. Scherza apologized for not having a report last month; it was conflicted because he couldn't find out what options the district had. Rather than give the committee a report that was a wish list of he would like to do and might not be doable, administration chose to forgo that until they received some information. He does have assurances from legal counsel that they will have it be the beginning of the week.

Mr. Lombardi asked Ms. Coutu if there was another number in addition to the \$250,000 that the district would need in order to get the NATEF Certification. Ms. Coutu responded that there is an application fee which is approximately \$1,500 to \$1,800. According to the teacher, this is the money he said had to be there in order to make the application process. She knows that NATEF has changed the

certification process. There may be more that they need to do at this point in time than there was when they started the process three years ago.

Mr. Lombardi asked Ms. Coutu to give the committee an idea of what was missing with regard to the equipment. Ms. Coutu responded that many times when she would get an inventory list she would receive a response that either these were purchased or should have been purchased but yet they can't be found or couldn't tell where they are. This is a problem because when the state wants to know where they are they want an auditor to come in. There is a possibility this November that the center will be audited because the federal auditors are coming in to different career and technical centers and looking for different things. She can't produce those items because this was before her time.

Mr. Traficante asked if there is an asset inventory every year, and Mr. Scherza said no. It would be too labor intensive. Mr. Balducci explained that when assets are purchased, the requirement is that the school that purchased a particular item has to inventory it; the Business Office supplies the tag; the information comes back to his office so that they have that information. If by chance during the year the item is either stolen or lost,

the procedure is to notify his office and it is processed through the district's insurance carrier. Over the last couple of years, they have had the need to purchase tools which is odd because once the complete set is purchased one would think they would keep the complete set, but every year or couple of years, it seems they had to buy a complete set of tools.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway asked if there was a definitive list of what was missing. The property should be inventoried regularly and accounted for and insured. There are a lot of losses, and she wasn't sure if they could quantify them. Mr. Scherza said that this area is giving administration a lot of difficulty because the people in those areas are required to give an inventory. For this program, they have not been able to get it. When pressing the issue, they can't get the answers. They have been told that they have to identify and produce and show everything that has been bought. It is the property of the State and not the district. As an example, the lifts will go to other centers around the State.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway asked who insures the items that are missing, and Mr. Scherza responded that it is insured by the Rhode Island Interlocal Trust. Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway asked if there should be some kind of compliance or regulations that the district should have been following that they were not. Mr. Scherza responded that this is a large district to have a full inventory of every item. He was not making excuses, and he doesn't know what the process has been.

He is still in the learning curve in that sense. He doesn't know how often it has happened or when it last happened.

Mr. Archetto indicated that he also wanted to know when the item was purchased and how much they cost. It seemed to him that this district has a problem with sports equipment missing and now automotive equipment missing. He asked what would be next. Administration should get its act together and develop a policy for things like this so that it doesn't happen again.

Mr. Stycos indicated that Ms. Coutu has been the director of the program for less than a year and before her it was Ms. Wagner and previously it was Mrs. Campbell. He stated that he wanted to know who was accountable for these stolen items. Mr. Scherza commented that administration would find out this information. Mr. Stycos added that the last three directors were on the payroll, and the teacher was on the payroll; so he didn't think that saying that they are trying to get an inventory and can't get one is sufficient. If his boss can't get something from him that she wants, he had better produce it or he may not have a job. Mr. Scherza commented that it would take \$70,000 to bring the equipment up to snuff; much of that the district had purchased over the last couple of years. The district doesn't know the value of the equipment lost or what it is. Mr. Stycos stated that administration needs to find that out and needs to hold someone accountable for that, whether it is the teacher, the tech aide, or the administrator of the building. People should not be allowed to walk

off with items from

Page 19      August 16, 2007

the school department and then people say they have to buy new ones. He would like a copy of all the evaluations for all the programs.

Mr. Stycos asked Mr. Scherza for a copy of his report that he gave to the committee at this work session. Mr. Archetto asked Mr. Scherza if the essence of his report is not to reinvigorate the program. Mr. Scherza responded that in his professional and personal opinion it would be fool heartedly, since the district has the ability to accommodate anyone who wants to take an automotive class and one that has performed better in skills competitions here at Cranston East. It can be done for any student in Cranston. Another reason he is not recommending it is because the district would be subsidizing other communities from their operating budget. Everyone knows the fiscal problems the city is having now. Mr. Stycos asked if the district would be subsidizing the tuition, and Ms. Coutu commented that she had corrected Mr. Scherza that the state wouldn't be paying part of the tuition for the sending districts. The state has not made that decision. Mr. Stycos asked that other than the missing equipment and the new equipment what the costs would be that the district would be incurring for the other communities. Mr. Scherza responded that one would be if the cities and towns don't want to send the students here. Secondly, Vanessa Cooley has indicated that the State of Rhode Island is moving toward funding only certified



programs. Obviously, if this is not a certified program, they are not going to pay the tuition. Mr. Stycos commented that at this point no one knows that for next year. Mr. Scherza said that he has taken this information from the person who coordinates the program for the State Department of Education. He was conveying to the committee what was told to him first hand. They are not going to fund programs that are not certified. Mr. Traficante added that this is the 50% share of the cost from the State of Rhode Island for the per pupil expenditure. Mr. Scherza added that the other half of the cost is paid by the sending district.

Mrs. Greifer commented that at the meeting she and Mr. Scherza attended with the feeder communities, they said that they weren't going to send anybody to that program. They said flat out that they were not going to send anyone. Mr. Scherza commented that they can counsel students not to come, but technically every student has a right to go to a career and technical center in the state. However, they would be advising the students to do everything in their power not to come here. Ms. Coutu explained that in one of the sending communities parents of students who have applied to the Career and Technical Center have said that the students are almost forced to come in to meet with the Superintendent of Schools and justify why they want to come to the Career and Technical Center and trying to convince them that they have similar programs at their schools which they do not. They are trying to tell them that they can't come to Cranston because they offer them something comparable at their

home school. She has had several parents call her and tell her that they have used harassment, bullying and strong-arming from their Superintendent. The State has actually gotten involved in that situation because there are parents very upset over the fact that the sending district is trying to prevent their children from coming to Cranston. Mr. Stycos asked if this was

Page 20      August 16, 2007

something unique to the automotive program, and Ms. Coutu responded that this is unique to all the programs. The ones she met with are specific to the automotive program because they felt it had no benefit for their students. One of the communities is doing a blanket type of message. Mr. Scherza added that the meeting Mrs. Greifer referred to it was stated very clearly by representatives from two other communities that if this is the level of quality of the program, they will do everything in their power not to send students here. By association, they are judging the Career and Technical Center by the program. Mrs. Greifer added that the comment was made at the meeting that the program was hurting the reputation of the Career and Technical Center. Mr. Scherza stated that this was not their comment; it was said to them. Mr. Archetto commented that in all fairness it is due to the fact that the program is not certified due to the fact that the \$70,000 needed to buy equipment has not been purchased. He felt that they would have

a different view point if the Career Automotive Center Program was certified. Mr. Scherza said that this was another whole issue that goes into personnel.

Ms. Coutu further commented that another thing to be taken into consideration that in terms of the grade distribution, the Career and Technical Center has a hard and fast rule about students who receive a C- or lower in their career and tech program that they cannot remain in the program. She has made some exceptions for students who have had exceptionally difficult years. There was one student this past year who had mental health issues, and she made an exception. She talked with the counselors about putting into place a contract with those students. For the most part the students who don't achieve in the Career and Tech Center with at least a C or better have been asked to drop the program. In the Level I program of 11 students who are left in the program, 4 of those students would be removed from the program because of their grades. That would leave 7 students in Level II. In the Level III program it would have a possible 8 students. Of those students, 5 would be removed from the program due to their grades. That would leave 3 students in that class. That is before looking at those students who left for various reasons. They would be funding \$250,000 for approximately 10 students for Levels II and III.

Mr. Traficante remarked that based on his past experience when they did an audit every year in City Hall they also had to do along with that

operational audit an inventory audit to identify all the assets by serial number and also had to indicate which materials or equipment were discarded because of age and which were purchased. He asked if this is done in the school department's audit. Mr. Balducci responded that there is a running inventory list that has been accumulated over the years. The list is adjusted from year to year based on new equipment purchased and old equipment that is discarded from one year to another. It is based on equipment that is transferred from one location to another. There is a transfer sheet and a disposal sheet. The individual building principal communicate this information to his office. If something is purchased and needs the definition of a fixed asset based on the value of the equipment purchased, his office will send the necessary documentation to the appropriate school along with a tag. If that

Page 21      August 16, 2007

item is transferred from one location to another, the school is supposed to let him know. Auditors will go to a particular school to see items purchased. Mr. Neri added that as a former principal and a shop teacher, it is done on a continuing basis for assets. Mr. Balducci commented that if the cost is less than \$500 for a fixed asset and based on the popularity of an item, he may choose to inventory that item as well because it has a tendency to walk. Mr. Traficante stated that he was assuming that the equipment that was purchased for the Automotive Program in most cases was worth a lot of money

and was tagged. There is a way of tagging this.

Ms. Coutu clarified her earlier comments that there is and has been an inventory system that the State also has. It appears that for a period of time it has not been strictly enforced. With Mr. Roy Seitsinger coming in this year, it is becoming much more strictly enforced. They have sent out an entire booklet as to what they expect this year in terms of asset inventory. She believed the amount the State is using is \$1,000, and if an item is more than five years old, it doesn't have to be inventoried. She did send in an inventory from the auto program to the state department. Whatever Mr. Iozzi inventoried from the auto program was sent in the state department. She has received no feedback from them asking where certain items are. They also have to send in inventories from the other programs as well. That is something they are still working on. Because it hasn't been done for a while, they are making sure it is an accurate inventory. They are going by their purchase orders from Perkins and purchase orders from the city accounts. Some of the items they have discussed that seem to have been missing are not items of the over \$1,000 category, but if someone has ten or twelve students in class and there are only eight wrenches, that is the type of thing she has been hearing. There aren't enough tools for every student. She doesn't think this is the type of thing one would see on an inventory.

Ms. Iannazzi stated that it was important not to make decisions in a vacuum. When they were considering Horton School, they had a full

plan from administration as to what Horton was going to become, and she and Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway have talked with Ms. Coutu about possible future ideas for the automotive program. She asked Ms. Coutu to explain what she has in mind for that space if the program is closed. Ms. Coutu indicated that there are many possibilities. She wanted everyone to know that they are possibilities right now. One of the ideas she has had is to have another career and tech program brought in of the trade type such as plumbing or electricity that is a hands-on program for the students who like to do that type of work. There is a need for those people out in the community. Another idea is that there is a phenomenal aquaculture program at the tech center. Aquaculture has been in the news a lot lately in terms of oyster farming and how it is from growth to the table. There are a lot of other things that can happen with aquaculture in terms of tropical fish growth and distribution. They have had an offer from Whole Foods that they may want to do a partnership with the center, and Whole Foods will provide them with tanks and possibly a van for distribution as Whole Foods is opening in Garden City. If she puts the aquaculture program in a larger

Page 22      August 16, 2007

space, they could grow tilapia and be their sole distributor of tilapia in this area. One of her goals for the center is to have things that are very self-sufficient, and if the aquaculture program can become self-sufficient, it takes it off the

operating budget for Cranston and takes them from being concerned about Perkins Funding. If they get in with Whole Foods, they can take in more students because they can take in students from all over the state for aquaculture because this is the only program in the state. The ideas are endless for the center.

Mr. Archetto stated that he was concerned about putting an aquaculture program in an automotive center. There is lead, gasoline, oil and all kinds of toxic chemicals. Mr. Traficante assumed that it would be cleaned thoroughly beforehand. Mr. Archetto hoped that special EPA people would go in their first.

Mr. Traficante recused himself from the discussion regarding the Ubio Lease for the New England Laborers' Cranston Public Schools' Construction Career Academy.

He turned the Chair to Ms. Iannazzi.

#### **4. Ubio Lease for NEL/CPS Construction Career Academy**

Mr. Scherza explained that there was nothing new on the lease; this was an extension of the old lease. Mr. Stycos stated that he could understand why the committee took out the lease in the beginning because there wasn't a charter school; but now there is a charter school. He asked why the charter school doesn't lease its own

building. Mr. Balducci noted that each committee member had a copy of the original lease in their possession. Mr. Stycos indicated to Attorney Cascione that the School Committee doesn't lease any other buildings for any other charter schools and asked why the charter school doesn't lease its own building. Mr. Balducci responded that the cost of the lease is paid for by the charter school budget, so the cost is not reflected in any school department budget line item. Mr. Stycos asked that if the charter school is paying for the lease why they don't hold the lease. Attorney Cascione responded that if they are paying it he couldn't see why they shouldn't be the lessee on it. He didn't know if the School Committee had the authority to be the lessee. He added that he could research it and have a definitive answer for the committee on Monday evening. Mr. Stycos said that the committee is making the Cranston Public Schools liable for the lease of a building over which they have no control and if the charter school closed down next week the committee is liable for the lease.

Ms. Iannazzi returned the Chair to Mr. Traficante.

Mr. Stycos indicated to Mr. Nero that with regard to the soda machines, there is flavored water, and there shouldn't be flavored water. Mr. Nero responded that it should be

Page 23      August 16, 2007

water, 100% fruit juice and milk in the machines. Mr. Marrocco added



**that he was at the schools and it will be water, 100% fruit juice and milk in the machines.**

**Chairman Traficante asked for an update at Monday evening's meeting on the sub-committees' information.**

**Mr. Archetto asked that Attorney Cascione research the UBIO lease for the committee for Monday evening's meeting.**

## **VII. Adjourn Work Session**

**Moved by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Mrs. Greifer and unanimously carried that the work session be adjourned.**

**There being no further business to come before the work session, it was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Andrea M. Iannazzi**

**Clerk**